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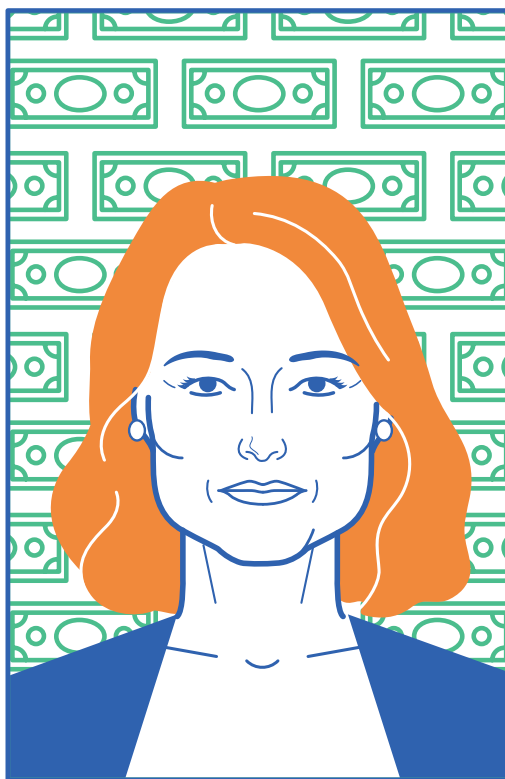
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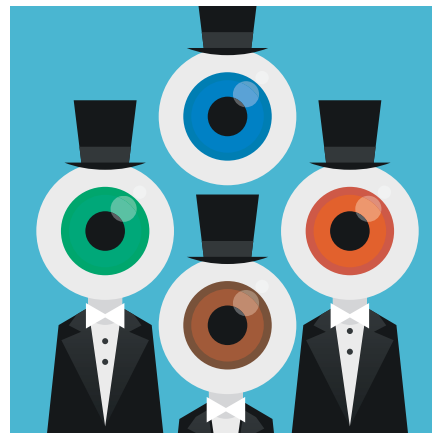
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ASPIRATIONS *of* ELEGANCE

*The Endless Adolescence of
Mx Justin Vivian Bond*

By Grace Dunham

PHOTOGRAPH BY HERRING & HERRING

Last Saturday at Joe's Pub, at the 9 p.m. performance of *Mx America*, Justin Vivian Bond stood onstage silently "modeling" for two minutes. In a glittery pink dress, Mx Bond shifted between poses — coquettish, demure, self-conscious — amid the gleeful laughter of the audience. Playing the part of Mx America, a girlish but knowing former beauty queen with a slight Southern drawl, Vivian told the crowd, "I'm an aspirational white woman of elegance."

The joke, of course, is Mx America's delusion: An older woman is asking the audience to assess and reassess her; the room laughs — an aging trans woman is convinced she is beautiful. The many personas of v (Vivian's long-preferred gender pronoun, though lately v also uses "they" and "she") — including Mx America and Kiki DuRane, an alcoholic, aging burlesque singer — are equal parts self-aggrandizing and self-loathing, glamorous and heartbreaking. As Mx America told the crowd later that night, bathed in pink light, "My friend Billy's father once said you could measure the depth of a person's tragedy by the amount of distance between how they see themselves and how they're seen by others." She paused to take a sip of her white wine on the rocks. "As an American and as a trans person, I find this hypothesis to be really interesting."

When Vivian and I meet at a bar to discuss v's simultaneous retrospectives, at Joe's Pub and the Participant Inc. gallery, v quickly turns the meeting from an interview with this writer into a conversation with an acquaintance (we had met briefly once before). And anyway, three decades into v's career, Vivian doesn't seem comfortable with authority.

"For the first time in my life," v says, "only since I started being more vocal about my trans identity, I feel like I can be vulnerable."

Vivian's rare gift is the ability to perform parody and honesty through the same character. Skewering contemporary, privileged

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white womanhood is not mutually exclusive with letting the audience glimpse v's uncertain identity.

Midway through *Mx America*, v recounted the story of v's first visit to the Hamptons since beginning to take estrogen. “What would a middle-aged white woman do in Sag Harbor?” v asked the audience sheepishly. “I know. I know what I’ll do. I’ll go to a stationery store.”

“I call myself an aspirational white woman of elegance,” v clarifies as we wait for our second round of martinis, “because I know I’ll never succeed at being a white woman of elegance.”

Vivian was born in 1963 in the drab, predominantly white middle-class suburb of Hagerstown, Maryland. “My mother and father are the safest people you’ve ever met,” v says.

V was assigned male at birth, but v's interest in and tendency toward femininity was the subject of confusion and harassment from early on. A young Justin first “communed” with the name Vivian when v was assigned a report on a famous American for a ninth-grade history class. Instead of writing about a man, as v's teacher recommended, v went with movie star Vivien Leigh, the British actress famous for playing Scarlett O’Hara. Though she appeared to be a picture-perfect starlet, refined and feminine, Leigh was in fact unrepentantly bisexual, mowing through ingenues and rough trade she picked up on the streets of London and Los Angeles. (The history paper was mostly about Leigh’s schoolyard lesbianism.)

V eventually took Vivian as a middle name in 2011; by then v was already a patron saint of transgressive femininity, having spent the past two decades playing Kiki DuRane to gay audiences around the world. Kiki was an homage to another white woman of elegance from Viv’s past: a college roommate’s mother, a former burlesque performer who carried her early glamour with her into addiction and motherhood. “She was just this radical woman,” Vivian explains. “She went back to get her degree in social work and then got cancer. Even when she was missing her

PHOTOGRAPH BY WAGZ2IT

teeth and bald, she was still doing the soft-shoe in the bedroom.”

In the early Nineties, in the wake of the AIDS crisis, Mx Bond, then simply known as Justin Bond, brought Kiki DuRane to life in San Francisco, accompanied by a maximalist gay pianist named Herb, played by Kenny Mellman. Their campy humor — Kiki’s inebriated monologues weaving together pop culture and immeasurable grief — gave gay audiences something to laugh about during tragedy.

Kiki & Herb gradually shed its cult status over the course of the decade, eventually landing billings at Carnegie Hall, in 2004, and the Sydney Opera House, in 2007; that same year, *Kiki & Herb: Alive on Broadway* was nominated for a Tony.

The success of *Kiki & Herb* was a lifelong dream, but eventually the acclaim became oppressive. The show’s fans were loyal and obsessive — as they continue to be; the upcoming reprise of *Kiki & Herb* at Joe’s Pub sold out in just over two hours — but more mainstream visibility didn’t allow Vivian certain freedoms v needed in order to feel as though v was continually experimenting with v’s art and identity. (For v, it seems, these are one and the same.)

“Those were goals I had,” v told me. “I achieved those goals, and then I realized that they weren’t fully satisfying. They didn’t make me happy. I was doing a lot of things I didn’t like doing. I was doing a lot of coke. I was buying a lot of shoes.”

So, in 2008, Vivian retired the act. Around the same time, v fell in love with a radical queer named Nath Ann, twenty years v’s junior, and followed him to a queer land project in rural British Columbia, where v, Nath Ann, and their radical faerie friends ran naked through the woods unrestricted.

The relationship liberated v creatively. “If I’d been with a middle-aged gay lover, they would have been like, ‘What do you mean you’re quitting [*Kiki & Herb*]? You can’t quit,’” Vivian said. “But for Nath Ann it was like, ‘Well, yeah, that’s bullshit.’ Most people who are my age want to be comfortable. They want

to relax, to have security and their path worked out. As an artist, I like to be surrounded by energetic people who want to experience the world and constantly be reinterpreting it.”

V went from dating Nath Ann to another relationship with a younger man: Jeremy, a cute, polite, young man in glasses (v calls him a “nerd”) whom v had harbored a crush on for eight years prior to their relationship.

In the past decade, over the course of these two defining relationships, v also made the decision to begin taking hormones and publicly come out, or rather, clarify v’s trans identity.

ONE OF THE WISDOMS that Mx Justin Vivian Bond imparts, as a performer and a friend, is that authenticity is not some singular, stable place. Though Vivian is 52 years old, not just cult famous but famous famous, v is obviously more interested in experimentation than calcification.

The author and performer Kate Bornstein, close friends with Vivian for almost thirty years, describes v as “the most beautiful boy, the most beautiful girl, the most beautiful woman, the most beautiful man.”

Though Bornstein is older than Vivian — she acted as a big sister and mentor to Vivian when v started performing — she says she often feels like v’s younger brother. “V allows me the space to play,” Bornstein explains over the phone. “V and I share an identity that I don’t always get to be, which is boy. Not man, not masculine: Peter Pan.”

Midway through our second martini, Jeremy joins us. Our first topic of conversation is pornography: inflatables (Vivian likes that); “dad on boy” (Jeremy and myself); the pleasure of the cameraperson speaking directly to the performer (this, we all agree on). Vivian expresses ethical uncertainty about v’s interest in “she-male” porn. “It’s not politically correct,” v says, “but I like to see people having sex that, at the very least, have my body parts.”

Outside with Jeremy and Vivian after drinks, smoking in the alley behind Joe’s Pub, v teasingly refers to Jeremy as a “fag.” Looking to understand their dynamic, I ask, “Do you want Jeremy to be a fag?”

“Of course not,” Vivian says. “I don’t want Jeremy to be anything.” Why be anything when you can be everything? ♡

'V and I share an identity: Peter Pan'

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STAND UP AND DELIVER

WRITTEN BY Jackson Connor ■ PHOTOGRAPH BY Amy Lombard

SOMETHING'S UP WITH CHRIS GETHARD. He's rarely making eye contact, looking up from his plate of cold fries only now and again to scan the room like he's casing the exits. The comic's star has been on the rise for a decade and a half, blazing a trajectory that took him from his years with comedy superstardom's farm team at the Upright Citizens Brigade to a recurring role on Comedy Central's *Broad City* to, now, his own talk show. About to start its second season on Fusion, the show is nothing but high-octane weirdness. One episode featured Will Ferrell helping to officiate a series of wedding ceremonies live on set; part of another was devoted to telling human secrets to dogs ("Sleeping and being put to sleep are two very different things").

"Chris dominates [at being] a nerd," says Ilana Glazer,

Gethard's *Broad City* co-star and a former student of his at UCB. "With Chris, you're not afraid to be enthusiastic. That's part of the market he's got cornered there."

So maybe it's just the setting that's making him nervous. We're holed up in the back of Chelsea's Peter McManus Café, a place Gethard knows all too well. Fifteen years ago, when he was beginning his comedy career in New York City, UCB was headquartered a few blocks away, in an abandoned strip club on West 22nd Street. (For years, hordes of drunken sailors would stumble into the theater during Fleet Week searching for one of Manhattan's "raunchiest" topless bars, only to find Gethard and his cohorts onstage.) UCB's performers would often congregate at McManus after rehearsal or a show — at one point Horatio Sanz had his own key to the building. "I had some of the best nights of my life in this bar," Gethard says, eyes widening beneath his trademark horn-rims. "But I also had





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a couple of the worst."

Now 35, Gethard remembers drinking so heavily at McManus in his early twenties that he once vomited and passed out facedown on the place's bathroom floor. "I was in that booth one night and I drank way too much," he offers, nodding at an empty table in the corner. "A friend of mine made a joke that I reacted really poorly to, and I started crying. I was screaming and yelling and making a real spectacle of myself in front of all these people I respected."

Gethard's battles with mental illness and alcoholism stretch all the way back to his childhood in West Orange, New Jersey. "It was a real *Outsiders*-type situation," he quips, describing growing up in a rough blue-collar neighborhood in the otherwise tony Manhattan suburb. He was an angry kid with a chip on his shoulder who found solace in the underground punk rock of the Nineties; to escape bullies he became one in his own right, later telling NPR that he used to lurk in AOL chatrooms looking for people to terrorize other than himself.

Like many lonely nerds, he discovered himself on vacation. Gethard remembers taking a family camping trip to Cape May one summer, the only annual jaunt his parents could afford. There was a terrible storm one night and Gethard awoke to his mother and brother huddled amid the glow of a small TV set, laughing hysterically as the rain beat down on the roof of their trailer. "They were watching *Letterman*," says Gethard. "I remember I woke up and I watched it and I was like, 'This is the funniest person in the world.' Then my brother got *David Letterman's Book of Top Ten Lists* and that was my initial comedy bible."

It wasn't until he was in college at Rutgers and found himself sideswiped

by a black depression that he began plumbing his own life for material. The experience helped lead him to the world of sketch comedy, first as part of his school's improv troupe and later traveling across the river to study at UCB.

Gethard quit drinking shortly after that particular meltdown at McManus in the early Aughts, and over the years since, he's made something of a comedic brand out of his struggles. "Career Suicide" is a recent project, an hour of stand-up that centers on issues of suicide, depression, and alcoholism and routinely features bluntly put stories like the one about McManus.

And really, who can resist a one-man show expounding on the sexual side effects of antidepressants or the time he intentionally crashed his brother's car, nearly killing himself? "I didn't want to become the suicide comedian; it gets romanticized a little too much," Gethard explains (humorlessly, it should be noted). "For some reason comedy is one medium where it's OK to talk about being depressed and being suicidal."

For almost a decade Gethard looked

on longingly as his peers landed high-profile acting and writing gigs — which didn't exactly help with his anxiety and fears of inadequacy — but gradually he earned his stripes in the community, eventually becoming an instructor at UCB and launching the first, live incarnation of *The Chris Gethard Show* at the theater in 2009. Success or something like it arrived when the show made it to public access television in 2011, and in 2013 it moved to Fusion, your destination for crowd-surfing in banana suits and debates over what's better: hand sanitizer or Hitler?

It's no great secret that comics often mine their struggles with illness, mental or otherwise. But it's different with Gethard. In between monologuing about masturbating to Nickelodeon's *The Suite Life of Zack & Cody* and getting his nipples clamped in front of a studio audience, he seems to be after something in particular — to ease others' suffering at the price of baring his own. In 2012, he made headlines after an anonymous fan wrote to him on Tumblr about having suicidal thoughts. Gethard replied immediately, providing detailed accounts of the sorrow and misery he experienced as a teenager and how his life had steadily improved after he sought help. "I don't even know who you are and I promise you that I love you," he wrote, fearing it might be the last chance to reach a troubled kid, much like the one he had been.

"There are peers of mine who said they were worried about me, family who said they were worried about me, but I just knew I'd rather fall on the sword doing it my way than go do a bunch of shit just for ego," Gethard says. "I'm pretty proud of the fact that I managed, more than most in my chosen profession, to do things on my own terms."



Eyes on the prize:
Gethard in his midtown writers room

'I'm pretty proud of the fact that I managed, more than most in my chosen profession, to do things on my own terms'



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An HILTON ALS'S 'ONE MAN SHOW' *Eye* BEGINS HIS SEASON AT for an THE ARTIST'S I INSTITUTE

WRITTEN *by* Jennifer Krasinski

PHOTOGRAPH *by* Sean Pressley

THE AMERICAN WRITER and cultural critic Hilton Als has been roundly and rightfully praised as one of the great literary portraitists of our time. In the pages of such publications as the *Village Voice* and the *New Yorker*, and in his books *The Women* and *White Girls*, he has written with breathtaking grace and clarity on the complex conditions of being in, or of, or despite one's time.

Over the years, however, Als has been more reticent about his photographic portraiture. Apart from the Instagram account he maintains and the pictures collected in his book *Justin Bond/Jackie Curtis*, image-making has been something he's largely kept private — until now.

Earlier this month, Als opened "One Man Show: Holly, Candy, Bobbie, and the Rest," the first of three exhibitions he will present as part of his six-month season at the Artist's Institute, the nonprofit contemporary installation and research space on Manhattan's Upper East Side. He is the first writer to receive



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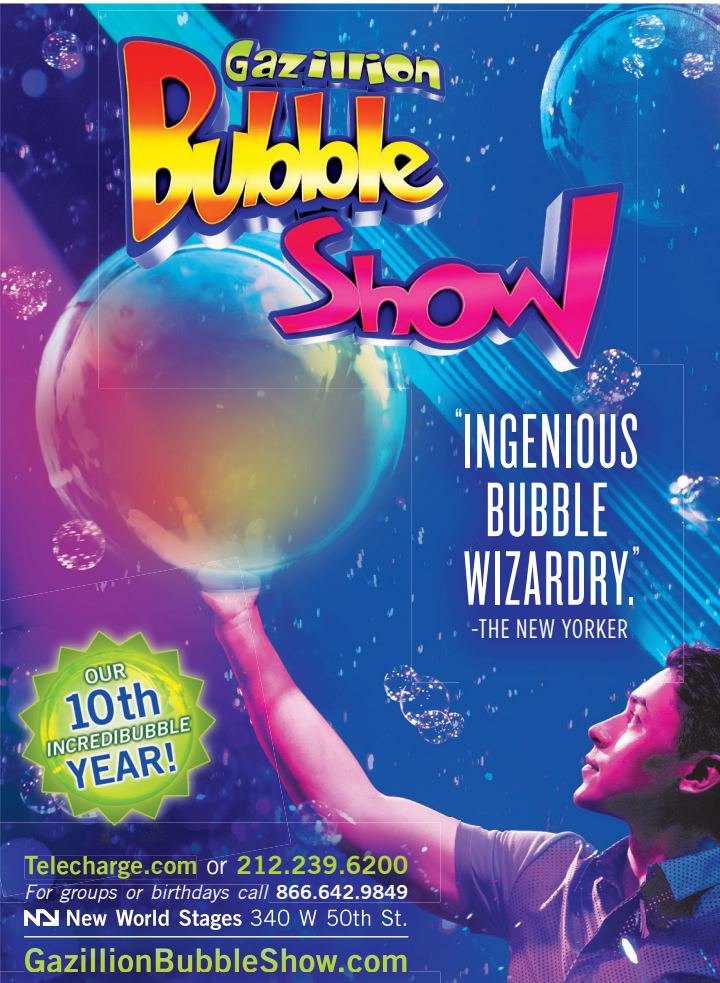
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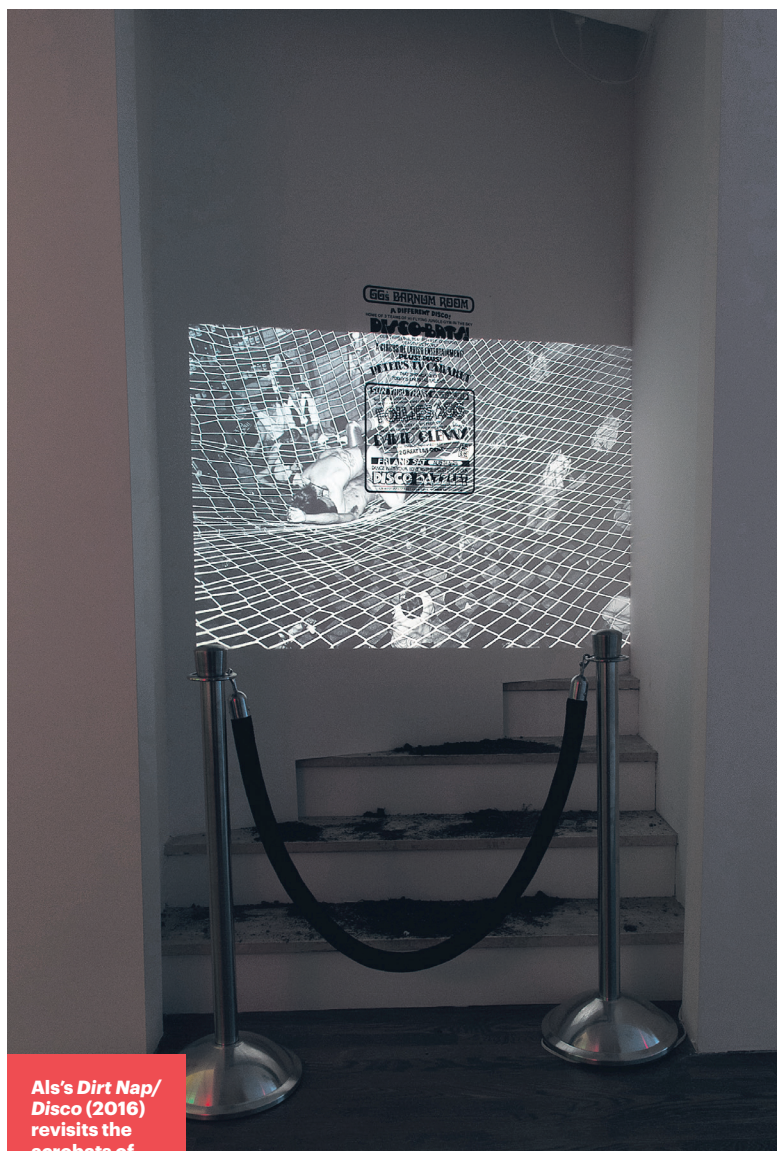


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Al's Dirt Nap/Disco (2016) revisits the acrobats of GG's Barnum Room.

a season at the Institute — that, traditionally, has been the province of established visual artists. For Als, his time there marks “a real coming-out.”

“One Man Show” honors some of Als’s heroes, many of whom are now gone: Warhol Superstars Candy Darling, Holly Woodlawn, and Curtis; drag performer/playwright Ethyl Eichelberger; the trans performers at the circus-cum-disco GG’s Barnum Room; his friend Bobbie Derektor. The exhibition is a hybrid of sorts — an “atmosphere,” Als offers — that defies easy description. It can be thought of, variously, as a self-portrait refracted through the I’s of others; a personal retrospective conducted via photographs found, borrowed, owned, collected, commissioned, and taken by Als; and a series of installations that electrify the photographic form, restoring its presence as a product of light and shadow. Finally, and perhaps most poignantly, the work can be understood as Als’s celebration of the art and craft of self-invention.

“To me the show is really about transformation in two ways: through the body and through photography,” he tells me over lunch one overcast afternoon at a restaurant in the West Village. He explains that in a cultural moment that hails the success of *Transparent* and the coming-out of Caitlyn Jenner, those who paved the trans-way are too often forgotten, left out of the conversation. “People like Candy and Holly and Jackie and my friend Bobbie were amazing because there was no context for them other than themselves,” he says. “I love them because their politics are in what they’re doing.” Without mainstream approval, or the buffer of money, or the language with which to talk about themselves, “all they had were their bodies and their bravery.”

Als conjures his subjects, materializing them while also pointing up their disappearance.

Where words fall short of articulating the self, the self can be written on the body and captured in an image. "I've always loved photography as a medium of self-presentation," Als says. When he was a boy, he would take pictures with a Polaroid; his older sister Yvonne would sit for him ("my great model," he calls her). For a child, photography can offer an early lesson in the power of one's own eye to frame the world, to see something in it and then hold proof of this vision in hand. But for Als, photographs also stirred in him a sense of responsibility for their subjects. He needed to make sure they were safe, saved. "I was one of those kids who would archive pictures — would write information on the back of them — because I didn't want anyone to be forgotten," he explains.

Als's writing has likewise served to guard against forgetting. *The Women* weaves together stories of people dear, if not always near, to him — all forces that shaped his sense of self in one way or another. He writes of the poet and playwright Owen Dodson, who was both mentor and lover to Als when he was a teenager. He revives Dorothy Dean, a legendary New York "fag hag," who died in Boulder, Colorado, far from the circles who knew her best. And he recounts some of the details he learns of his mother's life — about her first husband back in Barbados, about how she followed Als's father to New York — she having always avoided telling them herself.

"Tristes Tropiques," an essay collected in *White Girls*, his most recent book, is another tour de force of Als's form. In it, he aches for those no longer around: his college friend "K," who died of AIDS in 1992 ("my heart's desire"), and photographer/filmmaker "SL," or "Sir or Lady," a close friend with whom he experienced an intimacy he likens to twinning. "I have always been one half of a whole," he writes, revealing that his mother named him Hilton in tribute to a friend's stillborn son. "The minute I was born, I was not just myself, but the memory of someone else."

To perform the memory of someone else is in many ways Als's ambition for "One Man Show." He conjures his subjects, materializes them, while also pointing up their disappearance. For *Bobbie*, a slideshow of images of his beautiful, androgynous friend, he leaves certain slots in the tray empty so that as the display advances, sometimes you see a photograph and sometimes you stare at nothing. *Candy* is a wall-size screenprint on cellophane, for which Als evaporated Richard Avedon's iconic frieze of Warhol's Factory members, leaving only the faintest traces of the superstar's image. Als plays with light and shadow so that it feels as though phantoms flicker all around: in the transparency projected over a Diane Arbus photograph to create the image-object *Stormé, Bobbie, and the Rest*; in the films of Werner Schroeter and Darryl Turner that dance across a wrinkled scrim tacked to a wall; in the disco light that throws changing colors into a corner of the gallery.

When "One Man Show" comes down on April 24, Als will install the second part of his season, which is dedicated to James Baldwin. The third will pair sister Yvonne with performer Sheryl Sutton, who worked with Robert Wilson in the 1970s. "They both introduced me to the avant-garde," he says. Als mentions that, the day before our meeting, he'd had an idea and gone back to the galleries to install a new light. Like memory, the exhibition may shift over time, enacting its very own living portrait: that of its creator at work. ♥

Hilton Als
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'PERGAMON AND THE HELLENISTIC KINGDOMS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD'

APRIL 18–JULY 10

Hellenistic Europe has never really gotten its due. Its artistic riches — the *Winged Victory* is just one — are generally seen as small consolation for a civilization in decay. True, Greece never again scaled the heights of its earlier classical era, but there was beauty in decadent revelry. This Met show brings together 260-plus pieces, a third of which are from the Pergamon Museum in Berlin, to make a case for the importance of a profligate culture. *Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Avenue, metmuseum.org*

'PHILIP GUSTON: PAINTER'

APRIL 26–JULY 30

If you Google **Philip Guston** and browse the image results, most of the paintings you'll see are of disembodied

limbs and Klansmen smoking cigarettes. Guston's earlier work, made when he was still considered an abstract expressionist, is relatively obscure. This show of around 85 drawings and paintings centers on his last decade as an abstractionist and is Hauser & Wirth's first exhibition of his work since it began representing his estate last September. *Hauser & Wirth, 511 West 18th Street, hauserwirth.com*

'STEVE MCQUEEN: OPEN PLAN'

APRIL 29–MAY 14

One of the merits of the Whitney's new building is its lack of columns: On the fifth floor, visitors can look across 18,200 square feet of unobstructed space. The filmmaker **STEVE MCQUEEN** is among the artists who have been given license to experiment with the gallery, which here hosts an expanded edition of McQueen's 2012 *End Credits*. The piece presents the FBI's declassified



files on the African-American actor Paul Robeson, who was blacklisted and placed under federal surveillance amid the Communist paranoia that swept through Hollywood during the Red Scare. *Whitney Museum of American Art, 99 Gansevoort Street, whitney.org*

'NICOLE EISENMAN: AL-UGH-ORIES'

MAY 4–JUNE 26

Why has it taken so long for New York to catch up with **Nicole**

Eisenman? Her eerie, surreal paintings — one pensive picture depicts a topless woman toasting with a glass of wine while a skeleton holds her hand — seem tailor-made for a city drunk on anxiety. The New Museum will put on the first New York survey of Eisenman's work, including the figurative plaster sculptures that have occupied her time in recent years. *New Museum, 235 Bowery, newmuseum.org*

'ROBERTO BURLE MARX: BRAZILIAN MODERNIST'

MAY 6–SEPTEMBER 18

Before the modernist landscape designer **Roberto Burle Marx** made a point of doing things otherwise, most Brazilian gardens were based on French designs. It was up to Marx — a Brazilian of German-Jewish and French descent — to stress the potential of drawing inspiration from native plants. This Jewish Museum show features more than a hundred works by Marx, including paintings, tapestries, and rarely seen architectural plans for synagogues. *Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Avenue, thejewishmuseum.org*

CRITIC'S PICK

REIGNING PIGEONS

Ornithophobes beware: This spring, the Brooklyn Navy Yard is set to host an avian performance worthy of Hitchcock. At sunset on May and June weekends, the Red Hook-based artist Duke Riley will release flocks of pigeons — thousands, we're told — as part of "**Fly by Night**," his ambitious public-art project produced in conjunction with Creative Time. The winged rats promise an enchanting show: Each will be banded with LED lights so the group can hover like a free-floating constellation over the East River. Currently housed in lofts on a ship docked at the Navy Yard, the birds will retire to their bedrooms each evening after their approximately hour-long aerial ballet. Long a fancier of the gutter bird, Riley, 43, is a man who knows his feathered friends: In the mid-Nineties, he lived and worked in a coop, and in 2013, he mounted a performance in which pigeons smuggled Cuban Cohibas into Key West. Riley assures us that his current cast will be well taken care of — he's got an avian veterinarian on retainer — and that some will get nights off. "I have to talk to their union manager," Riley says. There is, of course, the matter of guano and its potential to drop on spectators. Riley insists such fears are unfounded. "As it is with most animals, they generally shit more when they're sitting down or relaxed," Riley says. His acrobats, he confirms, shouldn't pose a threat. "The shit is not something I'm that concerned about." *Begins April 10, at the intersection of Sands and Navy streets, Brooklyn; creativetime.org* **JESSICA DAWSON**



Pigeons have a dear, dear friend in the artist Duke Riley.

'SIGMAR POLKE'

MAY 7–JUNE 25

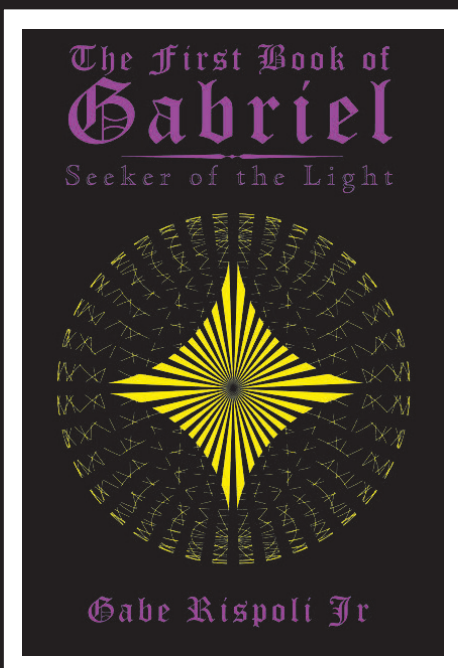
There are few artists as celebrated for their eclecticism as **Sigmar Polke**. Where others are derided for a lack of focus, Polke is upheld as a painter (and photographer, sculptor, collagist, etc.) who refused prescriptions. His travels were as wide-ranging as his work: Indonesia, Tasmania, and the Seychelles are among the countries he visited during his 1980–'81 trip around the world. A modest David Zwirner show of around twenty works looks at the art that resulted from his journey. *David Zwirner, 537 West 20th Street, davidzwirner.com*

'VITO ACCONCI: WHERE WE ARE NOW (WHO ARE WE ANYWAY?), 1976'

MAY 29–AUGUST 30

Vito Acconci is best known for *Seedbed* (1972), for which he spent hours masturbating beneath a ramp at Sonnabend Gallery while visitors traveled overhead. The remains of this project, which include a video of Acconci at work (ahem), are included in a P.S.1 show — one of several marking the museum's fortieth anniversary — prioritizing the artist's confrontational early performances. The conceptual anchor is a reinstallation of a 1976 piece involving a wooden plank and an open window. *MoMA P.S.1, 22-25 Jackson Avenue, Queens, momaps1.org* **PAC POBRIC**

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Dance

FJK DANCE

APRIL 6-9

Fadi J. Khoury, son of the artistic director of the National Iraqi Ballet, trained in Beirut before moving to the States in 2009, where he studied at Alvin Ailey. Two years ago, Khoury formed a multinational troupe that's made a couple of stealth appearances around town, generating a lot of buzz. Catch their fusion of contemporary ballet, ballroom, and jazz styles in Khoury's new *Reflections*, performed

to a commissioned score by **Peter Michael von der Nahmer**. New York Live Arts, 219 West 19th Street, newyorklivearts.org

DANCE THEATRE OF HARLEM

APRIL 6-9

The "black ballerina" spotlight may be on American Ballet Theatre's **Misty Copeland** (coming to the Metropolitan Opera House in May), but DTH's deep bench of beautiful black ballet

CRITIC'S PICK

FOR LOVE OF THE DANCE

The fierce fiscal challenge of mounting large-scale dance works resolves itself nicely when the producers are conservatory programs. Choreographers don't have to pay the student performers or rent the theaters, musicians play for credit rather than cash, and below-market tix ensure full houses. And the young dancers, who have to be awfully good just to get into these schools, are beautifully trained. The **Juilliard dance department's spring show** (March 23-26, Peter Jay Sharp Theatre, 155 West 65th Street, events.juilliard.edu) offers twentieth-century classics by Jiri Kylián (his 1978 *Symphony of Psalms*, set to a Stravinsky choral masterwork), Jerome Robbins (his 1959 *Moves*, performed in silence), and alumnus Paul Taylor (whose own troupe is simultaneously dancing right across Lincoln Center Plaza at much higher prices, and whose gorgeous 1985 *Roses* has music by Richard Wagner and Heinrich Baermann). Down in the East Village, students from the **Second Avenue Dance Company**, of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University (March 31-April 4, Jack Crystal Theater, 111 Second Avenue, 5th floor), show a suite from José Limón's 1958 *Mazurkas*, set to Chopin and reconstructed by current Limón company member Kristen Foote; up-and-coming choreographer Gregory Dolbashian's *Avalanche 19*; and dances by Slovenian Vita Osojnik (her new *Random acts of kindness*, for a cast of 31) and Tisch alumna Netta Yerushalmy (her 2014 *Pictograms*), as well as student works rotating in repertory. **ELIZABETH ZIMMER**



SADC is one of two conservatory troupes set to hit the stage this season.

dancers makes its presence known in new and favorite works by **Dianne McIntyre**, **Elena Kunikova**, **Nacho Duato**, **Helen Pickett**, and DTH's resident choreographer, **Robert Garland**. *New York City Center, 131 West 55th Street, nycitycenter.org*

E-MOVES 17

APRIL 7-9

A gorgeously restored water-distribution facility near the City College campus hosts, each spring, four "evolving" choreographers who embark on new collaborative works with musicians or visual artists. This year's dance-makers are **Davalois Fearon** (a fixture of Stephen Petronio's troupe), hip-hop and soul "artrepreneur" **Laurie M. Taylor**, Texas native and salsa specialist **Desiree Godsell**, and Emmy-winning tapmaster **Jason Samuels Smith**. *Harlem Stage Gatehouse, 150 Convent Avenue, harlemstage.org*

MIAMI CITY BALLET

APRIL 13-17

Founded by Balanchine's "prodigal son," **Edward Villella**, and now under the direction of **Lourdes**

Lopez, this plucky troupe celebrates its thirtieth anniversary with its first-ever Lincoln Center appearance, bringing dances by **Liam Scarlett**, **Justin Peck**, **Twyla Tharp**, and **Alexei Ratmansk**, as well as three Balanchine ballets. Opening night's a gala featuring *Serenade*, the first work the Russian-born master made in the U.S. *David H. Koch Theater, 20 Lincoln Center Plaza, davidhkochtheater.com*

ELLIS WOOD

APRIL 29-30

The daughter of two former members of the Martha Graham Dance Company, Wood here presents *The Juggler of Our Ladies*, celebrating the many chapters of a woman's life and featuring four generations of women ranging from ages ten to eighty. The performers include Wood herself; her mother, **Marni Wood**; her daughter, **Stella Nakada**; and four others, among them **Ellen Graff**, who danced with Graham and now teaches



at Purchase. *Joe's Pub, 425 Lafayette Street, joespub.publictheater.org*

DORRANCE DANCE

APRIL 26-MAY 1

If you missed **MICHELLE DORRANCE** on *The Late Show With Stephen Colbert*, catch her in Chelsea. This world premiere of *ETM: Double Down* includes **Nicholas Van Young's** electronic tap music, natch, and incredibly virtuosic danc-

ing by the loose-limbed Dorrance, who recently scored a Bessie and a MacArthur "genius" grant. She and Young are joined here by **Ephrat "Bounce" Asherie** and an ensemble of hotshot tappers and percussionists. *Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Avenue, joyce.org*

DANCEAFRICA

MAY 27-30

This 39th annual Memorial Day weekend celebration of African dance, music, art, film, and community events has

a new leader — **Abdel R. Salaam** — and a focus on the music and dance traditions of Senegal. Harlem-born Salaam has directed Forces of Nature Dance Theatre since 1981; he'll bring a new slant to Brooklyn this year, succeeding longtime director **Chuck Davis**. The festival's inviting street bazaar features over 150 vendors of food, crafts, and fashion — arrive hungry, and with deep pockets. *BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, 30 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn, bam.org* **ELIZABETH ZIMMER**

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Film



MILES AHEAD

APRIL 1

DON CHEADLE has been trying to make a movie about Miles Davis for years, and that passion comes through loud and clear in this, his directorial debut. As Davis, Cheadle goes all-out in massive sunglasses and colorful outfits, adopting a voice so hoarse he might as well be whispering each line into somebody's ear. And as director, Cheadle shatters biopic conventions, leaving them in the dust as he scrambles his storyline between past and present, approximating the wild rhythms of the musician's life. Sony Pictures Classics, sonyclassics.com

movies like *Friday Night* and *Bastards*, he requires no words — simply a heavy breath or a well-timed glare — to seduce. Ahead of the release of Stéphane Brizé's *The Measure of a Man*, Metrograph has programmed this short Lindon series. In addition to the fierce, uncompromising *Bastards*, there's Philippe Lioret's *Welcome*, Alain Cavalier's *Pater*, and *A Few Hours of Spring*, also by Brizé. Metrograph, 7 Ludlow Street, metrograph.com

ELVIS & NIXON

APRIL 22

Following *Chi-Raq*, Spike Lee's ram-bunctious sort-of musical about sex and gun violence, this latest theater-bound Amazon Studios production orchestrates a square-off between Elvis Presley (Michael Shannon) and Richard Nixon (Kevin Spacey). Negotiating these two heavyweight performers — Shannon being no stranger to characters of an outspoken nature, and Spacey presumably operating in his own wheelhouse thanks to *House of Cards* — is **Liza Johnson**, who earned strong reviews for her direction of Linda Cardellini in the postwar character piece *Return*. *Bleecker Street*, bleeckerstreetmedia.com

LOUDER THAN BOMBS

APRIL 8

The Norwegian director **Joachim Trier** makes sad movies shrouded in pain. *Reprise* follows two friends whose literary ambitions drive them to unhappy ends; his subsequent *Oslo, August 31st* shows a day in the life of a recovering drug addict who relapses. For his English-language debut, Trier and an all-star cast (Gabriel Byrne, Jesse Eisenberg, Isabelle Huppert) tell the story of a grieving family harboring secrets. *The Orchard*, theorchard.com

'FOUR FILMS STARRING VINCENT LINDON'

APRIL 15-17

The great French actor **Vincent Lindon** combines the physique of a brooding lion with the effortless romanticism of a leading man. In Claire Denis

'SEE IT BIG! VILMOS ZSIGMOND'

APRIL 22-24

The directorial giants of Seventies Hollywood are well-known — Robert Altman, Michael Cimino, Brian De Palma, Steven Spielberg — but as the cinematographer who brought

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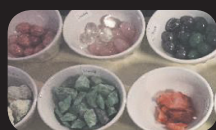
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the proper light and texture to their movies, the late **Vilmos Zsigmond** (1930–2016) belongs in the same class. For Altman, he lent a simmering visual unease (constant zooms, restless panning) to Elliott Gould's L.A. investigation in *The Long Goodbye*. For Cimino, he gave the epic canvas of *Heaven's Gate* a faded, golden glow — perfect for the movie's melancholy perspective on America's past. These two gems are joined by Spielberg's *Close Encounters* and De Palma's *Blow Out* in MoMI's tribute to the DP. *Museum of the Moving Image*, 36-01 35th Avenue, Queens, movingimage.us

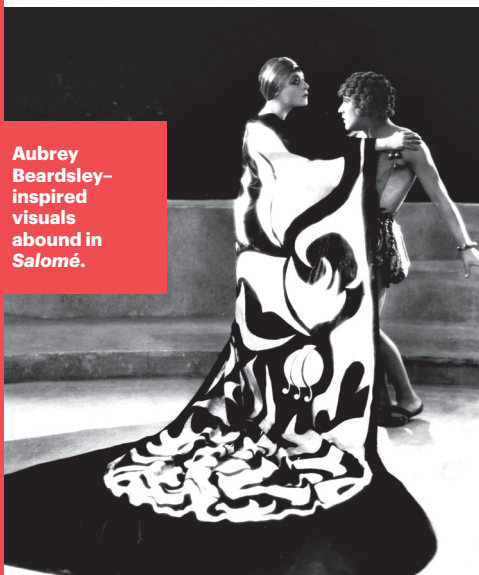
MONEY MONSTER

MAY 13

Jodie Foster may have cast Mel Gibson as a man who talks to a beaver hand-puppet, but she's no joke as a director: Her earlier *Little Man Tate* and *Home for the Holidays* are rewarding, emotionally offbeat takes on narratives about family ties. By comparison, her new *Money Monster* is more thematically timely and chronologically experimental — a real-time hostage thriller set in the harsh climate of Manhattan high finance — and should challenge her in strange ways. *TriStar Pictures, sonypictures.com*
DANNY KING

CRITIC'S PICK

SUNLIGHT'S OVERRATED ANYWAY



Aubrey Beardsley-inspired visuals abound in *Salomé*.

The days may be getting longer and the temperature rising, but vernal pleasures matter little to the devotees of New York's repertory houses, which this season provide endless enticements to stay indoors and in pitch-blackness. BAMcinématek's "**Chantal Akerman: Images Between the Images**" (April 1–May 1, 30 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn, bam.org) commemorates the titan filmmaker, who died at 65 last fall. Kicking off with a two-week

run of her last film, *No Home Movie*, this near-complete retrospective showcases Akerman's unparalleled gift for creating profoundly personal movies, whether in documentaries or literary adaptations. "In this darkness of the cinema...lies the very fascination of the film (any film)," Roland Barthes wrote in his 1975 essay "Leaving the Movie Theater." Anthology Film Archives salutes the philosopher and semiotician with "**Roland Barthes at the Movies**" (April 8–14, 32 Second Avenue, anthologyfilmarchives.org), a program devoted to titles that he collaborated on, influenced, or wrote about — such as 1933's *Queen Christina*, the subject of "The Face of Garbo," his paean to that film's star. The series also includes the theorist's sole screen appearance, as William Makepeace Thackeray, in André Téchiné's *The Brontë Sisters* (1979) — a cameo so good that Barthes almost overshadows the biopic's high-wattage stars, Isabelle Adjani and Isabelle Huppert. And at the Film Society of Lincoln Center, "**An Early Clue to the New Direction: Queer Cinema Before Stonewall**" (April 22–May 1, West 65th Street and Broadway, filmlinc.org) assembles an astounding array of lavender-hued movies, in a variety of genres, made before the pivotal LGBT uprising of 1969. Expertly curated by Thomas Beard, this decade- and nation-spanning lineup reveals that even benighted eras couldn't stop the creation of some of the most outré homo fantasias — like Charles Bryant and Alla Nazimova's feverish Oscar Wilde adaptation, *Salomé* (1923). **MELISSA ANDERSON**

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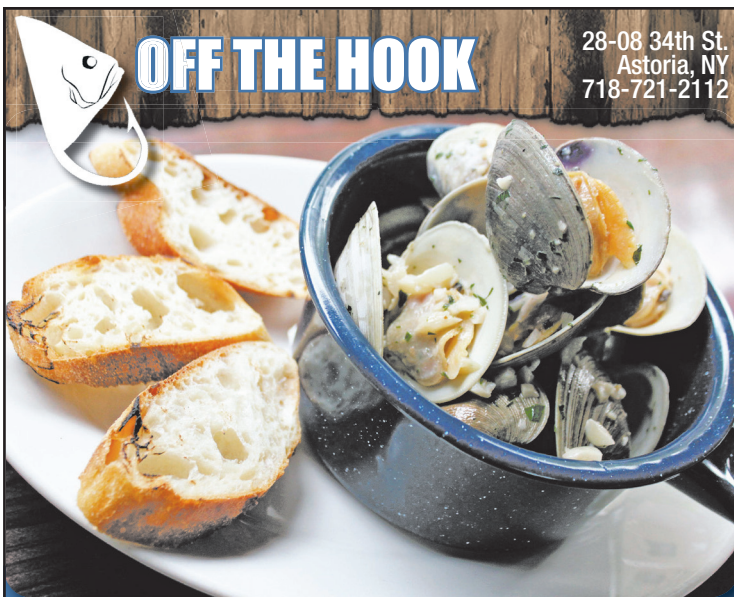
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Food

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APRIL 10

Sunday morning's most popular cocktail is getting a celebration of its own. Curated by the Bloody Mary Liberation Party, tastings at this three-hour fest are provided by Travel Bar, Lucky Luna, Catfish, 706, Iron Station, Talde Brooklyn, and Skylark. Local artisanal companies are giving out food and drink samples, and Brooklyn-based DJ Shakey is spinning. *Grand Prospect Hall, 263 Prospect Avenue, Brooklyn, thebloodymaryfest.com*

BACON AND BEER CLASSIC

APRIL 22-23

Anticipate porcine-centric bites from more than forty local restaurants and suds from fifty regional breweries including Gun Hill Brewing Co., Speakeasy Ales & Lagers, and Bad Seed Cider. Look, too, for Jenga, a bungee run, a bacon-eating contest, and a photo booth. (Three sessions spread across two days are intended to mitigate long lines.) A panel of judges is awarding winners for Best Overall Bacon Dish; the chosen few

CRITIC'S PICK

A SQUARE MEAL



The Hylands are bringing their expert pizzas to Williamsburg.

"It took over our lives," Emily Hyland tells the *Voice*, reminiscing about launching Emily, the quirky pizzeria that she and husband Matt opened in Clinton Hill as first-time restaurateurs two years ago. Now the Hylands are gearing up to open **Emmy Squared** (364 Grand Street, Brooklyn, *pizzalovesemily.com*), a sibling pie parlor in Williamsburg. The couple has teamed up with pizzaiolo Lou Tomczak, formerly of Greenpoint Neapolitan haven Paulie Gee's, to develop a menu of fluffy and crunchy Detroit-style square pizzas, as well as Italian-American sandwiches including chicken, meatball, and eggplant parmigiana. This rarely encountered (in New York City, at least) regional pizza style flips the craft on its head, layering cheese and other toppings directly onto the dough before finishing things off with a generous ladling of sauce. Cooked in a traditional gas deck oven, the Detroit pie assumes a serious char on the edges while the inside remains yeasty and soft. And though their Williamsburg space has room for fifty, a stark contrast to the original's intimacy, Emily maintains that the new digs will be steeped in just as much kitschy comfort: Decorations, she says, will likely come from "raiding our parents' houses for cool antiques and wall art." The second location also features an expanded bar area and 23 beers on tap, so expect bar bites like gochujang-spiced wings and the likely appearance of the famous Emmy burger. "We know people would really like burgers," Matt says, referring to one of our favorite patties around town, which boasts dry-aged beef and a pretzel bun. **ZACHARY FELDMAN**

will compete against one another in this year's World Food Championships in Kissimmee, Florida. *Citi Field, 123-01 Roosevelt Avenue, Queens, baconandbeerclassic.com*

VEGETARIAN FOOD FESTIVAL

MAY 7-8

At this plant-based gathering, join celebrity chefs and vegan advocates, including *Chopped* contestant **Charles Chen**, Veggie chefs-owners **Rich Landau** and **Kate Jacoby**, and *Vegan Roadie* **Dustin Harder**. In addition to restaurants and cruelty-free vendors, the event features a series of TED-style talks with authors, physicians, and nonprofit representatives. *Metropolitan Pavilion, 125 West 18th Street, nycvegfoodfest.com*

HARLEM EATUP!

MAY 19-22

Honoring the cuisine and arts scene of its namesake neighborhood, this four-day fair — spearheaded by co-founders **Marcus Samuelsson** and **Herb Karlitz** and honorary chair **Bill Clinton** — hosts collaborative dinners as well as a two-day outdoor tasting at Morningside Park. **Alex Guarnaschelli**, **Jacques Torres**, and **Nyasha Arington** are among the guest chefs. *Various locations, harlemeatup.com*

CARLA HALL'S SOUTHERN KITCHEN

Nashville native and host of *The Chew* **Carla Hall** is bringing her hometown's

infamous poultry dish to Cobble Hill. Inspired by hearty Sunday dinners at her grandmother's house, Hall is highlighting cayenne-coated bird along with meat-free renditions of southern sides (think smoked onion and paprika-infused collards and potato salad). After numerous construction setbacks, the place is now slated to debut in April. *115 Columbia Street, Brooklyn, carlahallsouthernkitchen.com*

SEN SAKANA

Peru's large population of Japanese immigrants has made an indelible mark on the country's cuisine. **Sen Sakana** — opening in April — celebrates this union. Led by executive chef (and Peruvian descendant) Mina Newman and Japanese-born Taku Nagai, the concept features sushi, ceviche, anticuchos, and items from a robata grill. *28 West 44th Street*

AGERN + GREAT NORTHERN FOOD HALL

Noma co-founder **CLAUS MEYER** is launching his first U.S. ventures with a bang. In April, his Nordic-influenced American endeavors commence with Agern, a seasonally driven restaurant and bar helmed by executive chef Gunnar Gíslason, previously of the Reykjavik fine-dining mecca Dill. Agern is adjacent to Meyer's Great Northern Food Hall (set to open in May), a 5,000-square-foot space with five food pavilions and a bar, in Grand Central's Vanderbilt Hall. *89 East 42nd Street SARA VENTIERA*



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Literature

JOHN JODZIO

MARCH 24

It might seem like **John Jodzio** relies on shock factor, and in a way, he does, but not how you think. Sure, his stories almost exclusively depict fringe-living weirdos in even weirder situations: navigating the buyer's market for used sex chairs, extreme agoraphobia, tiger abduction. But even though his themes elicit a "what?" and then a prompt "no!" usually from the first sentence on, Jodzio's real ability to surprise comes across in his characters' humanity: They're really just like us. For those willing to go down that rabbit hole, *Knockout* promises

more of the same dark humor. See Jodzio in conversation with Emily Condon, Jonathan Goldstein, and Sean Cole at this book launch. *Powerhouse Arena, 37 Main Street, Brooklyn, powerhousearena.com*

BARNEY HOSKYNS

APRIL 4

Even this deep into the digital era, the derisive "small-town mentality" observation still gets tossed around, as if geography alone determines how people think. So what is it about certain places that will win the approval of urbanites? **Barney Hoskyns** tells

CRITIC'S PICK

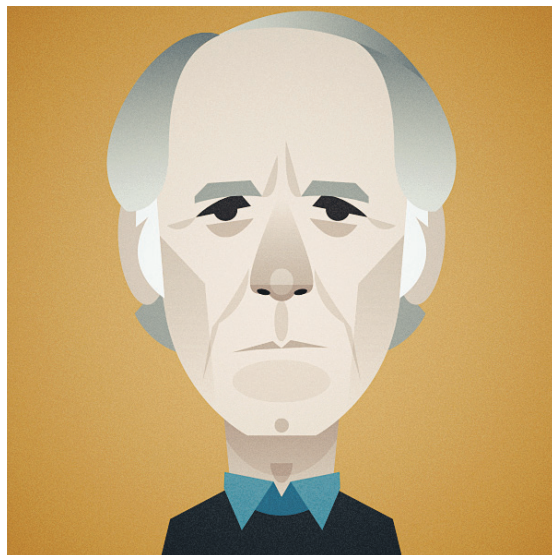
WORLDS APART

Raised in a working-class family in southeast London, **Kate Tempest** witnessed firsthand how generational poverty gives rise to drug use and violence, how souls get crushed under the tedium of manual labor. At sixteen, she attended a local open-mic night to spit rhymes on the subject; since then, she's shaped her lyrical creations into unconventional poetry and spoken-word performances. Now she's written a novel: ***The Bricks That Built the Houses*** (May 3, *Bloomsbury USA*, 416 pages), which tells the story of three strapped young Londoners getting the hell out of town. Given Tempest's considerable talent for penetrating the inner lives of the down-and-out, we should expect a tale of struggle on multiple planes — between friends and within individual psyches — as our protagonists oscillate between confidence and self-doubt, ambition and hopelessness, in the face of leaving everything they've ever known behind. Also coming this season is a short-story collection from **Helen Phillips**, whose funny but unsettling *The Beautiful Bureaucrat* — a 2015 novel set in a surreal workplace where employees are forced to keep silent and never take lunch breaks — drew comparisons to Kafka. ***Some Possible Solutions*** (May 31, *Henry Holt and Co.*, 240 pages) guarantees even more peculiar worlds, including one wherein everyone knows the exact date of their death, and another that brims with romantic couplings between earthlings and hermaphrodites from outer space. If these stories keep pace with Phillips's writing to date, then they will more than startle — her work already forces readers to confront life's biggest questions while finding humor in our own world's irrationality and cruelty. **AMY BRADY**



Tempest's work considers the turbulence of the down-and-out.

the tale of one beloved New York City outpost in his new book, *Small Town Talk: Bob Dylan, The Band, Van Morrison, Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix and Friends in the Wild Years of Woodstock*. At this event, Hoskyns banters with fellow music writer Michael Azerrad about how an upstate hamlet became the site of rock's most iconic event. *The Strand*, 828 Broadway, strandbooks.com



DON DELILLO

MAY 3

DeLillo is one of America's greatest living influencers of modernism, post-modernism, and whatever other -ism comes after that. As he approaches his eightieth year and seventeenth novel, DeLillo's go-to themes are still as resonant as they were four decades ago: disaster, technology, war, love, death, life, and the tall task of coping with them all in uncertain times. Zero K's protagonists wrestle with wealth, biomedical advances, and something like cryogenics, leaving a father and a son at odds over the meaning of human nature. *Scribner*, 288 pages, books.simonandschuster.com

POETRY 2016: PAST IS PRESENT

APRIL 8-9

The artists in this program represent the intersection of literature and performance — theirs is work that must be seen and heard to be fully appreciated. For this reason, it's one of the livelier annual readings, having become a showcase for hip-hop artists, dancers, musicians, and DJs as much as poets. This year's roster features **Liza Jessie Peterson**, *Climbing PoeTree*, **Jennifer Cendaña Armas**, **Flaco Navaja**, and music by **Yako440** with **DJ Reborn**. *BAM Fisher*, 321 Ashland Place, Brooklyn, bam.org

KELLY LINK + HELEN OYEYEMI

APRIL 20

Working in genres that have become largely associated with y.a. (fairytales, supernatural horror), **Helen Oyeyemi** (*Boy, Snow, Bird*) crafts complex but no less magical adult fiction about race and identity. **Kelly Link** (*Get in Trouble*) is similarly attuned to the strange and inexplicable, wresting the human emotion from all things fantastic in her wistful story collections. Here, *BuzzFeed's* Isaac Fitzgerald hosts a reading, conversation, and performance based on the two authors' work. *Symphony Space*, 2537 Broadway, symphonyspace.org

INDEPENDENT BOOKSTORE DAY

APRIL 30

IBD is the perfect time to gather a group, indulge in a complicated coffee beverage of some kind, and bookstore-hop the day away. Now in its third year, the nationwide celebration of brick-and-mortar bookshops features sixteen exclusive titles and art pieces, as well as sales, games, snacks, and other surprises depending on the location. New York City is home to nine of the four hundred participating stores. *Various locations in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens*, indiebookstoreday.com

LINDY WEST

MAY 18

West, the unapologetically badass writer/editor/performer behind #ShoutYourAbortion and the support blog *I Believe You | It's Not Your Fault*, is back in the service of femankind with *Shrill: Notes From a Loud Woman*. In her literary debut, West recounts her transition from quietude to out-loud activist, ruminating on the special hostility pop culture reserves for fat, funny women. She'll read selections at this afternoon's launch. *Word Bookstore*, 126 Franklin Street, Brooklyn, wordbookstores.com

ARTHUR LUBOW

MAY 23

Few photographers have challenged traditional standards of beauty as tenaciously as **Diane Arbus**, who depicted her pantheon of marginalized subjects as simultaneously tragic and defiant. Drawing on exclusive interviews and newly unearthed letters, Lubow's biography, *Diane Arbus: Portrait of a Photographer*, explores the artist's incredible body of work and unique technical approach. Here, Lubow talks Arbus with the author Wendy Lesser. *New York Public Library*, *Stephen A. Schwarzman Building*, Fifth Avenue at 42nd Street, nypl.org
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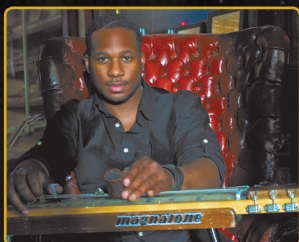
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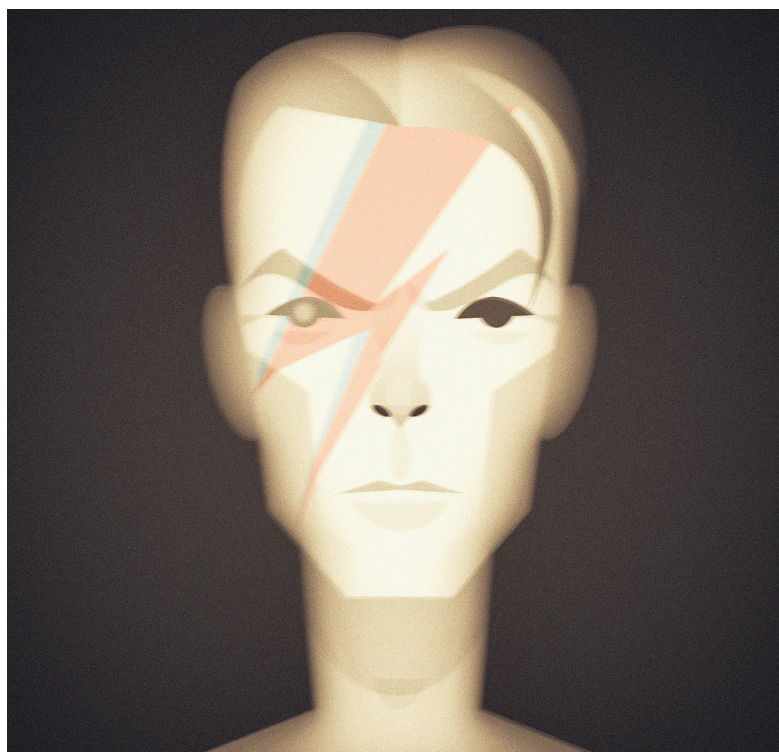
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Music



THE NECKS

MARCH 24-25

The Necks have said they can almost read one another's minds — adding that, if they could, it would probably be boring. The Australian trio of pianist Chris Abrahams, drummer Tony Buck, and bassist Lloyd Swanton have been refining their mind-melding skills during nearly three decades of group improvisation. Most Necks performances take the form of uninterrupted one-hour chunks of patient, uncannily empathetic instrumental conversations. It's neither jazz, rock, nor avant-garde trance music, although it borrows from all of the above. Mostly, it's music of exquisite collective personality you hardly need to be a mind reader yourself to relish. *Whitney Museum of American Art, 99 Gansevoort Street, whitney.org*

JOE RUSSO'S ALMOST DEAD

MARCH 24-26

The most musically nourishing and downright fun rock combo in town happens to be a Grateful Dead cover band. Following a stint as the remaining Dead members' go-to drummer, Joe Russo retrofitted his instrumental Led Zeppelin rep band, Bustle in Your Hedgerow, added a solid singer-guitarist (Brothers Past's Tom Hamilton), and set sail. As the Dead's remnants devolve into ever-sludgier versions of their former selves, JRAD navigates the band's jam standards with a spirit reminiscent of the Dead's amphetamine-aided 1967 debut. No two shows are the same, natch, and the music boogies, shimmers, and ex-

plodes, with Deadhead nostalgia a hazy afterthought. *Brooklyn Bowl, 61 Wythe Avenue, Brooklyn, brooklynbowl.com*

DAVID BOWIE TRIBUTES

MARCH 31-APRIL 1

From Lady Gaga's Grammy Awards appearance to Jherik Bischoff and Amanda Palmer's sumptuous string-quartet tribute, testimonies to the Thin White Duke's seemingly universal appeal have emerged unabated since his death. Impresario Michael Dorf's two-night, two-venue event, however, has been in the works for more than a year and will benefit a handful of worthy music-related charities. Longtime Bowie collaborator Tony Visconti wrangles the house band at what should be long, often surprising evenings of familiar songs performed with greater or lesser fidelity. Bette Midler, Laurie Anderson, Michael Stipe, the Roots, Perry Farrell, Cyndi Lauper, the Mountain Goats, Robyn Hitchcock, saxophonist Donny McCaslin's *Blackstar* backing group, and other names you would recognize will be on hand — an artist for every Bowie persona, as it were. *March 31 at Carnegie Hall, 57th Street and Seventh Avenue, carnegiehall.org; April 1 at Radio City Music Hall, 1260 Avenue of the Americas, radiocity.com*

BONNIE RAITT

APRIL 1-2

"Let's dig in deep and get out of this rut," wails Bonnie Raitt on the

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opening track of her latest album, *Dig in Deep*. The musical highlight of the otherwise lackluster recent Grammy Awards, Raitt has been digging in since her 1971 debut at the tender age of 21, when she was singing and praising the songs of female dynamos like Sippie Wallace and Calypso Rose. Twenty albums and one sobering-up later, she's developed a refreshingly adult musical persona that combines vinegar-marinated roots rock with relatively relatable balladry. (Consider the slow tunes the skunk-streak through her red tresses.) She's still a terrific slide guitarist, her band sounds better than ever, and lessons in aging gracefully come at no extra charge. *Beacon Theatre, 2124 Broadway, beacontheatre.com*

WHITE DENIM

APRIL 25-26

This Texas-based retro-futurist prog-boogie quartet has nailed the post-jam band thing with casually fiery playing and exactly erratic left turns. Denim basically adhere to the Wilco template of classic rock with an avant-garde tinge, and there's nothing wrong with that. When his guitarist and drummer left to join soul singer Leon Bridges's

start-up, frontman James Petralli released the kitchen-sink solo album *Constant Bop* (as Bop English) before making a few new hires and recording the tersely titled (and more soulful than proggy) *Stiff*. *Bowery Ballroom, 6 Delancey Street, boweryballroom.com*

CHHANDAYAN ALL-NIGHT CONCERT

MAY 7

When they hit the stage, well into the morning, the Saami Brothers qawwali party's voices, harmoniums, hand drums, and handclaps will tap into a 900-year-old mystical tradition. Though this, one of the city's more remarkable and important annual cultural events, is usually devoted to classical Indian music, the 2016 edition will focus on the legacy of Hazrat Amir Khusrau, the Sufi saint who created qawwali as a hybrid of South Asian and Middle Eastern styles. The evening begins at eight with qawwali performances by Delhi's Rooh Sufi Ensemble and Ustad Naseeruddin Saami. The concert then returns to its roots with the northern-Indian sounds of the exciting sitarist Ustad Shujat Khan and masterful Bangalore

classical vocalist Pandit Vinaya Torvi before the Saami Brothers arrive to sing their audience into a new dawn. *New York Society for Ethical Culture, 2 West 64th Street, chhandayan.com*

ANOUSHKA SHANKAR

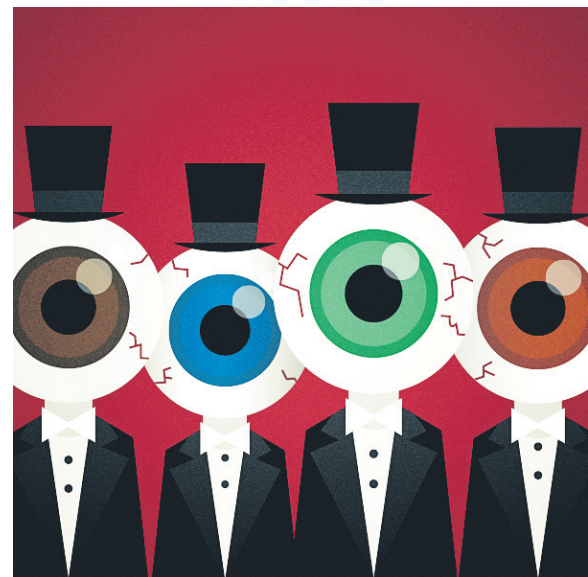
APRIL 2-4

Following two albums dedicated to the memory of Pandit Ravi Shankar, her father and musical guru, who died in 2012, Anoushka Shankar's new *Land of Gold* addresses the rather more global tragedy experienced by people displaced and dispossessed by war, economic inequality, and climate change. Sitar, tabla, and the oboe-like shehnai blend with double bass, cello, and the Hang — a sort of steel drum played by Shankar's co-writer, Manu Delago — commingle in gorgeous ruminations on people searching for a home. *City Winery, 155 Varick Street, citywinery.com*

WACO BROTHERS

APRIL 13

Is this the end of the Waco Brothers? "You can't kill us, we're already dead!" proclaim the Chicago punks in "DIYBYOB," the opener of their new *Going Down in History*. Take the title either way. Jon Langford's Mekons spin-off is a joyous, twangy party band that doesn't play honky-tonk country so much as a smart, politically engaged British expat's fantasy of what boozy American country music ought to sound like. Their famously raucous and bracingly intelligent shows are



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the stuff of legend, too. *Union Hall, 702 Union Street, Brooklyn, unionhallny.com*

CAETANO VELOSO & GILBERTO GIL

APRIL 20-21

Both born in Bahia in 1942, these song-writing giants have toured together fairly often over the decades. More recently, they've been circling the globe and appearing onstage side by side, with only their acoustic guitars, singing as elegantly and conspiratorially as ever. Their unplugged material encompasses psychedelic Tropicália, classic sambas, Antônio Carlos Jobim's bossa nova, a little reggae, and their own brilliant, poetic, and subtly subversive originals. Expect thick nostalgic vibes and spontaneous sing-alongs. *BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, 30*

Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn, bam.org

THE RESIDENTS

APRIL 26

Art-rock's very own Banksy of a band has been creating anonymous and conceptually cryptic music since the late Sixties, when they invited listeners to *Meet the Residents*. Their latest show, *Shadowland*, is a career retrospective performed by the group's latest incarnation: singer Randy Rose, guitarist Lionel Bob, and laptopist-composer Charles (Chuck) Bobuck. A screening of the documentary *Theory of Obscurity* will precede the band's surreal, semi-serious blend of fake rock-pomp and dystopic electronica. *Gramercy Theatre, 127 East 23rd Street, venue.thegramercytheatre.com*
RICHARD GEHR



CRITIC'S PICK

DOING WORK

Young Fathers have scared the shit out of people three times: once back in 2014, when the Scottish three-piece (live, a sometimes four-piece) received the Mercury Prize for their asymmetrical hip-pop album *Dead*, beating out surefire frontrunners FKA twigs and Damon Albarn with their diasporic brand of experimental, architectural sad-guy bangers. Then, when they named their Mercury-supported follow-up album *White Men Are Black Men Too*; and again in 2015 when they performed in Central Park as part of a concert curated by OkayAfrica.

Young Fathers play on our cultural expectation that artists can never, ever have a bad day at work like the average person. Rarely do the band members make eye contact, even when digital rhythms dissipate into polyrhythms, casting prisms, unfolding. The whisper-light, gossamer twine of their voices is indicative of exactly who they are: three guys who dragged each other, kicking and screaming, out of puberty (the band formed in 2008 after meeting at under-sixteen rap nights). Not relying on antics or attitude, allowing their sub-contextual, dreamy lyrics and music to speak for them, they clearly take themselves seriously, thereby demanding we take them seriously, too.

See them April 2 at the Music Hall of Williamsburg — I'm serious.

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Theater

THE TOTAL BENT

OPENS MAY 10

The Public, often home to the next quirky, exciting new musical en route to Broadway (think *Hamilton* or *Fun Home*), welcomes back musician-theater artist **Stew** this May. His musical *Passing Strange* — the coming-of-age saga of a young African-American musician — played there in 2007 before moving to Broadway and racking up awards. Now, with co-creator

Heidi Rodewald and director **Joanna Settle**, Stew brings audiences *The Total Bent*, a rock-gospel musical set in Alabama. *The Public Theater*, 425 Lafayette Street, publictheater.org

WAR

OPENS JUNE 6

Branden Jacobs-Jenkins emerged in 2014 as one of the smartest, most adventurous contemporary playwrights

CRITIC'S PICK

IVO ALL OVER

What do Arthur Miller, Tony Kushner, and Ayn Rand have in common? They're distinctively American writers who have all been staged recently by the Belgian director **Ivo van Hove**. The director — known for minimalist, ultra-modern stagings and screens galore — has spent the last two years bringing a European perspective to especially American tales, from *The Fountainhead* to *Angels in America*. And he's about to do it again: This month, van Hove's production of ***The Crucible*** (opening March 31, Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 West 48th Street, thecrucibleonbroadway.com) comes to Broadway, starring **Saoirse Ronan**, **Ben Whishaw**, and **Ciarán Hinds**. It's the director's fourth New York production over the past year: Since September, he's staged *Antigone*, the David Bowie musical *Lazarus*, and another Miller play, *A View From the Bridge*. But *The Crucible* is its own kind of complicated, an American classic rigged with American booby traps — racial caricature, hysterical women, the musty aroma of the high-school auditorium. Arthur Miller's quasi-historical drama famously uses the Salem witch trials as a parable, reflecting on the runaway panic of the U.S. in the McCarthy era. Since its 1953 premiere, the play has been many things, from a Daniel Day-Lewis star vehicle to the flash-point in an infamous downtown dispute in which Miller refused to permit the Wooster Group to adapt excerpts of the play. (It last played on Broadway in 2002, starring Laura Linney and Liam Neeson.) In the right directorial hands, Miller's plea for rationality over prejudice and paranoia could resonate deeply in a country reeling from the meteoric rise of Donald Trump. Indeed, it might take van Hove's outsider perspective to find a new vocabulary for this old chestnut. **MIRIAM FELTON-DANSKY**



Saoirse Ronan attempts to survive *The Crucible*.

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